

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A peer review system comprising;
a user interface for identifying the user, for accepting predefined user
5 information, and for providing a result;
a peer review application operably linked to said user interface, said peer
review application comprising knowledge base information and defined rules for (a)
accepting a paper for peer review, (b) defining a peer review assignment, (c) assigning
said paper to a defined set of reviewers for review, (d) providing to said reviewers
10 criteria for reviewing each said paper to produce a peer review result, and (e)
processing all peer review results for any paper to produce a peer review report; and,
a computer system having stored therein said peer review application, wherein
said computer system comprises computer memory and a computer processor.

2. The system of claim 1 additionally comprising an intermediary service
15 provider operably linked to said computer system, wherein said intermediary service
provider is capable of displaying said user interface and said peer review report to a
user.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein said predefined user information is used
to categorize users as one or more of the group consisting of submitters, sponsors,
20 reviewers, administrators, and visitors.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein said predefined user information
comprises identification information and a paper responsive to an assignment when
said user is identified as a submitter.

5. The system of claim 4 wherein said predefined user information
25 comprises identification information and a response to a peer review assignment when
said user is identified as a reviewer.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein said result is a peer review report.

7. The system of claim 3 wherein when said user is identified as a sponsor, said predefined user information comprises information needed to create a peer review assignment, define a set of reviewers, define said criteria for rating each paper, and
5 define criteria by which papers are to be distributed to said reviewers.

8. The system of claim 7 wherein said set of reviewers comprises the set of those submitting papers responsive to an assignment created by said sponsor.

9. The system of claim 7 wherein said knowledge base information and rules include rules for randomly assigning said paper to any reviewer except the
10 submitter, and for assigning to each reviewer only the number of papers predetermined by the sponsor.

10. The system of claim 7 wherein said peer review assignment includes a first date for completing the review of each paper, and a second date when each peer review result will be available to submitters.
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11. The system of claim 10 wherein said rules eliminate links enabling a reviewer to complete a peer review assignment once said first date has passed.

12. The system of claim 3 wherein said user interface provides notice to a reviewer of a peer review assignment, at least one link to each paper assigned for
20 review, and at least one link to a peer review page having spaces for accepting the reviewer's responses to queries defining the criteria for rating each assigned paper.

13. The system of claim 1 wherein said knowledge base information comprises a database including a list of potential submitters, a list of potential sponsors, a list of potential reviewers, a library of questions and rubrics which can be

used in reviewing papers, at least one paper to be reviewed, completed peer reviews and peer review reports.

14. The system of claim 1 wherein said predefined rules include selectable reviewing criteria to be used to create a peer review result, rules for random
5 assignment of papers, rules for establishing the start and finish dates of the peer review assignment, and rules for creating a peer review report from all peer review results.

15. The system of claim 1, wherein said computer memory is capable of storing said knowledge base information, rules, and peer review application.

16. The system of claim 2, wherein said intermediary service provider is a
10 hosted electronic environment.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein said hosted electronic environment is a website accessible on the internet.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein said user information includes identification data used to verify the user as a subscriber.

19. The system of claim 13 additionally including a library of peer review
15 assignments.

20. The system of claim 10 additionally comprising a third date when a reminder of the first date is sent to each reviewer.

21. The system of claim 1 wherein said user is remote from said computer
20 system and accesses said user interface using a remote computing device in communication with said computer system and capable of receiving information from, and sending information responsive to queries from said user interface.

22. A peer review method comprising;
providing a user interface capable of receiving user information, wherein said user information includes identification information,

providing a peer review application operably linked to said user interface,
5 wherein said peer review application comprises knowledge base information and defined rules for (a) accepting a paper, (b) assigning said paper to reviewers for review, (c) providing to said reviewers criteria for reviewing each said paper to produce a peer review result, (d) processing all peer review results for any paper to produce a peer review report;

10 providing a computer system having stored therein said peer review application, wherein said computer system comprises computer memory and a computer processor,
providing a hosted electronic environment operably linked to said computer system for displaying said user interface;

receiving said user information by way of said user interface; and
15 processing said user information with said peer review application to generate results comprising a peer review report.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of displaying said peer review report on said user interface.

24. The method of Claim 22 wherein a host of said hosted electronic
20 environment receives compensation for use of said hosted electronic environment.

25. The method of Claim 22 wherein said identification information is used to categorize the user as one or more of the group consisting of: sponsors, submitters, reviewers, and administrators.

25 26. The method of Claim 25 wherein said user information for each said submitter additionally includes an paper in digital form, uploaded and stored in said computer memory for processing and review.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein said defined rules for accepting said paper includes a date defined by said sponsor after which the submitter may no longer upload a paper for review.

28. The method of Claim 25 wherein said user information for each said submitter includes a review of another submitter's paper in digital form, uploaded and stored in said computer memory for processing.

29. The method of Claim 25 wherein said user information for each said sponsor additionally includes information defining parameters of a peer review assignment.

30. The method of Claim 29 wherein said parameters of said peer review assignment include criteria for reviewing papers.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein said criteria for reviewing papers can be selected from criteria contained in said knowledge base information and new criteria created by said sponsor.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein when said criteria for reviewing papers includes new criteria created by said sponsor, said criteria for reviewing papers contained in said knowledge base information is supplemented by adding to it said new criteria.

33. The method of claim 29 wherein said parameters include a start date and a completion date for said peer review assignment.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein said parameters additionally include a reminder date for said peer review assignment.

35. The method of claim 33 wherein the ability to upload a response to a peer review assignment is removed after said completion date.

36. The method of claim 34 wherein said peer review report is compiled and made accessible to users after said completion date on a release date selected by said sponsor.

37. The method of claim 30 wherein said parameters include a sponsor-defined group of reviewers.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein said group of reviewers comprise said submitters.

39. The method of claim 37 wherein said parameters include rules for random assignment of papers to reviewers and for limiting the number of papers assigned to each reviewer to that predetermined by the sponsor.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein said parameters include rules for random assignment of a paper to any reviewers except the submitter, and for assigning to each reviewer only the number of papers predetermined by the sponsor.

41. The method of claim 23 wherein said peer review results are processed using predetermined rules for combining said results to produce a peer review report.

42. The method of claim 27 wherein said paper is checked for originality before it is assigned to a reviewer for review.

43. A system for reviewing papers, comprising;
a user interface for identifying the user, for accepting predefined user information, for uploading papers to be reviewed, and for providing a result;

an originality checking application operably linked to said user interface, said originality checking application comprising knowledge base information and defined rules for checking uploaded papers for plagiarism;

5 a peer review application operably linked to said user interface, said peer review application comprising knowledge base information and defined rules for reviewing uploaded papers and for completing and submitting a review of said uploaded papers; and,

10 a computer system having stored therein said originality checking application and said peer review application, wherein said computer system comprises computer memory and a computer processor.

44. The system of claim 43 additionally comprising an intermediary service provider operably linked to said computer system, wherein said intermediary service provider is capable of displaying said user interface to all users who are in communication with said user interface.

15 45. The system of claim 43 wherein said predefined user information is used to categorize users as one or more of the group consisting of submitters, sponsors, reviewers, administrators, and visitors.

20 46. The system of claim 45 wherein said predefined user information comprises identification information and a paper responsive to an assignment when said user is identified as a submitter.

47. The system of claim 45 wherein said predefined user information comprises identification information and a response to a peer review assignment when said user is identified as a reviewer.

48. The system of claim 47 wherein said result is a peer review report.

49. The system of claim 45 wherein when said user is identified as a sponsor, said predefined user information comprises information needed to create an assignment to generate submission of a paper.

50. The system of claim 49 wherein said result is an originality report.

5 51. The system of claim 45 wherein when said user is identified as a sponsor, said predefined user information comprises information needed to create a peer review assignment, define reviewers, define criteria for rating each paper, and define criteria by which papers are to be distributed to said reviewers.

10 52. The system of claim 51 wherein said reviewers comprise the set of those submitting papers responsive to an assignment created by said sponsor.

53. The system of claim 51 wherein said knowledge base information and rules include rules for randomly assigning said paper to any reviewer except the submitter, and for assigning to each reviewer only the number of papers predetermined by the sponsor.

15 54. The system of claim 51 wherein said peer review assignment includes a first date for completing the review of each paper, and a second date when each peer review result will be available to submitters.

20 55. The system of claim 54 wherein said rules eliminate links enabling a reviewer to complete a peer review assignment once said first date has passed.

56. The system of claim 51 wherein said user interface provides notice to a reviewer of a peer review assignment, at least one link to each paper assigned for review, and at least one link to a peer review page having spaces for accepting the reviewer's responses to queries defining the criteria for rating each assigned paper.

57. The system of claim 43 wherein said knowledge base information comprises a list of potential submitters, a list of potential sponsors, a list of potential reviewers, a library of questions and rubrics which can be used in reviewing papers, at least one paper to be checked for originality and reviewed, completed peer reviews and peer review reports.

58. The system of claim 43 wherein said predefined rules include selectable reviewing criteria to be used to create a peer review result, rules for random assignment of papers, rules for establishing the start and finish dates of the peer review assignment, and rules for creating a peer review report from all peer review results.

59. The system of claim 43, wherein said computer memory is capable of storing said knowledge base information, rules, and peer review application.

60. The system of claim 44, wherein said intermediary service provider is a hosted electronic environment.

61. The system of claim 60, wherein said hosted electronic environment is a website accessible on the internet.

62. The system of claim 61 wherein said user information includes identification data used to verify the user as a subscriber.

63. The system of claim 57 additionally including a library of peer review assignments.

64. The system of claim 54 additionally comprising a third date when a reminder of the first date is sent to each reviewer.

65. The system of claim 43 wherein said user is remote from said computer system and accesses said user interface using a remote computing device in communication with said computer system and capable of using said user interface.

5 66. The system of claim 43 additionally comprising a calendaring application stored on said computer system, said calendaring application operably linked to said user interface and comprising knowledge base information and defined rules for (a) establishing and storing dates for completing assignments and (b) linking abbreviated calendar entries to full-text assignment requirements.

10 67. The system of claim 43 additionally comprising an inbox application stored on said computer system, said inbox application operably linked to said user interface and comprising knowledge base information and defined rules for creating an inbox for each user.

68. The system of claim 43 additionally comprising an application for storing notes on said computer system for later access by submitters and reviewers.

15 69. The system of claim 43 wherein said originality checking application includes rules for (a) obtaining, fingerprinting, and storing on a database relevant documents from a variety of sources which might be copied, (b) fingerprinting uploaded papers to be checked for originality, (c) comparing a fingerprint of a paper to fingerprints of said relevant documents to identify possible matches, (d) comparing
20 said paper's full text to a full text of all said possible matches, and (e) generating an originality report which highlights those portions of the paper which match portions of said relevant documents identified as possible matches.

70. The system of claim 43 wherein said peer review application includes rules for (a) accepting a paper for peer review, (b) defining a peer review assignment, (c) assigning said paper to a defined set of reviewers for review, (d) providing to said reviewers criteria for reviewing each said paper to produce a peer review result, and
5 (e) processing all peer review results for any paper to produce a peer review report.